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Lake Carriers' Association

ONE MARITIME PLAZA – 3RD FLOOR – TOLEDO, OHIO 43604
Phone: (419) 255-3940 • Fax: (419) 255-2350 • www.glmf.org

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K&L Gates, LLP
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Transportation Institute

September 16, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Gibbs
Chairman
Water Resources & Environment Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Timothy H. Bishop
Ranking Member
Water Resources & Environment Subcommittee
U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Great Lakes Maritime Community Supports Passage of WRRDA

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall and Chairman Gibbs and Ranking Member Bishop:

Great Lakes Maritime Task Force is the largest coalition ever assembled to promote domestic and international shipping on the Great Lakes. We represent the full spectrum of Great Lakes shipping: U.S.-flag vessel operators, shoreside and shipboard labor, shipyards, port authorities, cargo shippers, dredgers....

Thank you very much for your efforts in developing the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013. We are particularly appreciative of the provision that directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to treat the Lakes as a system when determining the dredging appropriation. The current approach of viewing the Lakes as 60 individual ports is a major factor behind the dredging crisis that has plagued the system for decades. More than 18 million cubic yards of sediment are strangling our ports and connecting channels. During last year's drought, some ships were losing more than 18,000 tons of cargo each trip.

In total nearly 130,000 jobs in the eight Great Lakes states depend on Great Lakes shipping. Waterborne commerce is also the greenest mode of transportation. Our nation has so much to gain if we fully utilize Great Lakes shipping. Your legislation puts us squarely on track to reach that goal.

Again, thank you for your tireless efforts in crafting the WRRDA. We will help you in any way possible to ensure its quick passage.

Very respectfully,

Donald N. Cree

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3rd Vice President-Government Relations